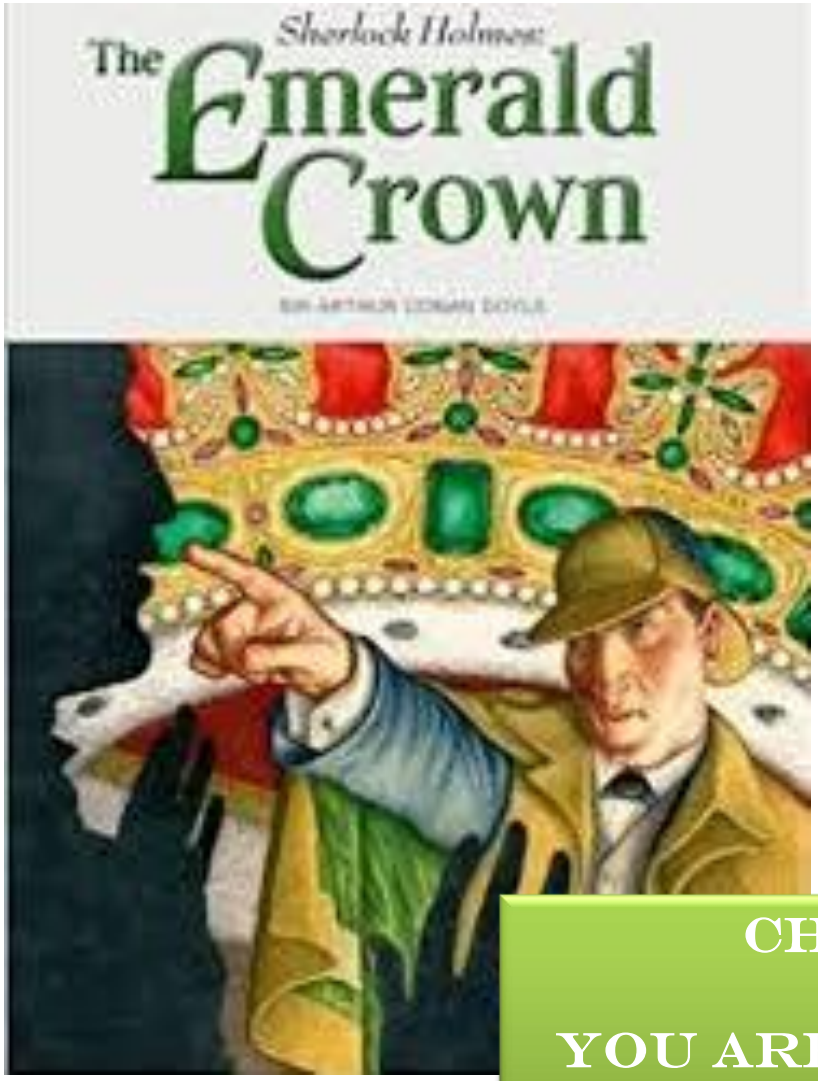

CHAPTER FIVE:

YOU ARE NEAR THE END OF YOUR TROUBLE

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'You are near the end of your trouble.'

Holmes and I took a carriage back to Baker Street. He talked about the weather but, of course, I wanted to know more about the case. I asked him a number of questions: 'Is Arthur guilty, do you think?' 'Where are the missing emeralds?' But every time Holmes went back to the weather. So I stopped asking my questions, and looked out of the window.

It was three o'clock when we arrived at Baker Street. Holmes walked quickly into the house. 'I have a lot more work to do on this case," he said. And with that, he ran upstairs to his room.

After some minutes, he came downstairs in an old coat, a black hat, and some dirty brown shoes. He looked in the hall mirror. 'What do you think, Watson?' he asked.

'Very good, Holmes,' I answered. 'You're the picture of a working man.'

'Thank you, Watson,' smiled Holmes. 'I'm sorry but you can't come with me this time. Well, see you later this

afternoon. Goodbye.' He pulled his hat down over his face, and went out into the street.

It was nearly six o'clock when Holmes came back. 'Hello, Watson,' he said happily. 'Can you take this?' He gave me an old black shoe.

'But what's it for?' I asked.

'I can't **explain** now,' he said. 'I'm going out again. To the West End this time. I'm going to be late home, I think, so don't wait for me.'

'And how's it all going?' I asked.

'All right. I went over to Streatham again this afternoon, but I didn't call at the house,' he said. 'But I mustn't sit here and talk. I must take off these old things. I need to be Sherlock Holmes once again.'

. Holmes was very pleased with his work that day, I could see. He went upstairs, and five minutes later, the front door closed behind him. He was out on his detective work once again.

I sat and waited all evening for Holmes to come back. When it was midnight, I went up to bed. I wasn't surprised. Holmes was often out late. When he investigated a case, he was sometimes away for days and nights.

What time did he come in? I don't know, but he was there at breakfast. He had a coffee in one hand, and a big smile on his face.

'Good morning, Watson,' he said. 'Sorry to start breakfast without you. But Holder is coming here at nine. You remember that, surely.'

'But it's after nine now,' I answered. 'And I heard someone at the front door a short time ago.'

Just then, the maid brought in our friend, Mr Holder. He walked slowly into the room. I pulled out a chair for him, and he fell into it. I was very surprised when I saw him. His hair was whiter than before, and his face looked very tired.

'Why is this happening to me?' he asked. 'Only two days ago I was a happy man. Now everything in my world looks black. This morning one more **terrible** thing happened in my house. My niece, Mary, left me.'

'Left you?' asked Holmes.

'Yes. She wasn't at breakfast this morning, and there was this letter for me on the hall table.'

Holder read the letter to us:

Dear Uncle,

You and Arthur are in trouble because of me.

I can ´t stay any longer in your house. I must leave you and never come back.

I am going to move far away from here, so please don ´t look for me.

Thank you for all the things you did for me.

Your loving Mary

´What is the letter all about?´ asked Holder.

´This is all for the best, I´m sure,´said Holmes. ´You know, Mr Holder, you are near the end of your trouble, I believe.´

´Do you know something about the emeralds, Mr Holmes?´ asked Holder.

´Perhaps.´said Holmes. ´Is three thousand pounds a lot to get the emeralds back, do you think?´

´No.´ said Holder. ´Three thousand is nothing!´

´Well, write me a cheque for three thousand pounds, then,´said Holmes.

Holder wrote the cheque and gave it to Holmes. The detective suddenly took out the missing corner of the crown from his pocket.

'You have it!' shouted Holder.

'Yes, I do. And now you need to do one more thing for somebody,' said Holmes.

'And what's that?' asked Holder.

'You need to say sorry to your son, Arthur,' said Holmes.

'Is he innocent then?' asked Holder.

'I told you this yesterday,' said Holmes, 'and I say it again today.'

'Are you sure of it now?' asked Holder.

'Yes, I am,' said Holmes.

'Then let's go and tell Arthur at once.'

'It's all right. He knows,' said Holmes. 'When I learned the **truth**, I went to talk to him. I told him my story, and he said, "You're right, Mr Holmes!"'

'Well, Holmes,' cried Holder, 'So what really happened on that terrible night? You must tell me now.'